EDC 423

Informational Text Plan

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**Part 1: Text Analysis**

| **Resources** | **Challenges** |
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| p 10. Reading Strategy: (If available) Compare article with another text about cheetahs. Here, the text is offering an option as to how to expand, compare, and contrast the knowledge given in this text. | p 10. Reading Strategy: Students may not have access to other texts about cheetahs. Also, asking students in grades 2-3 to compare and contrast informational texts about cheetahs could prove to be challenging. |
| p 10. Cover graphic shows the cheetah’s body in action, which is further explained in the text, as to how their body stretches, which helps them move quicker. | p 12. paragraph 1 “grasslands in Africa.” What is a grassland, and where is Africa? Students could think grasslands are just patches of grass, like their front lawns. What is Africa, and where is it? Why do the cheetahs live there? |
| p 12. “The black markings under a cheetah’s eyes cut down on the sun’s glare.” The caption of the graphic is helpful in explaining the vision problems of the cheetah, and how certain physical attributes aid them. | p 12. paragraph 2 “grabbing or holding prey.” The word prey is bolded, but not defined. What is prey, why do cheetahs hold their prey, and is it related to praying? |
| p 12 Column 2, paragraph 3. “Characteristics” The word characteristics is defined within the text as “a trait that makes something different from others.” | p 12. column 2, paragraph 3. The word “characteristics” could pose an issue, as it is a big vocabulary word, and pronunciation could be challenging for students in grades 2-3. |
| p 13. Paragraph 2. The word camouflage is bolded, and defined within the text. May use cover graphic to show how close the colors of the cheetah’s fur are to the surroundings. | p 12. Column 2, paragraph 1. “predators.” What is a predator? It is not defined within the text. Also, why is it important that a cheetah be a successful predator? |
| p 14. Paragraph 3, ending phrase, “. . acts like a spring.” - cohesion is present & allows reader to build coherent mental representation of presented ideas: ideas are connected. | p 14. Paragraph 1 - word “prey” might be unfamiliar to students, opportunity to confuse with “pray” with which some students might be more familiar with. |
| p 14. Paragraph 3 - words “when, then and, at the same time” support readers’ ability to sequence events: chronology of events is easy to follow. | p 14. Paragraph 2, sentences 2 & 3 - lacks a connective word: makes finding connections between ideas difficult. |
| p 14. Paragraph 4, phrase, “. . hip bones can pivot, or turn around.” - builds cohesion and clarifies potential difficulties in vocabulary: simplifies a challenging and/or unfamiliar word for the grade level. | p 14. Heading: Fast on Its Feet - use of referent in heading might be challenging for readers, as other animals (gazelles) we introduced in the paragraph before: |
| p 14. Heading: All the Right Moves - text structure prepares the reader for potentially new information about how cheetahs run, or maneuver in the grasslands: sets a purpose & sets a goal for readers. | p 14. Paragraph 4, sentence 2 - idea lacks cohesion: difficult to form a mental picture/representation of cheetah’s legs. |
| p 14. Paragraphs 12 & 13, ending phrase, “. . tail is flat.” - organization of text allows readers to compare and contrast the idea from paragraph 12 to the idea proposed in paragraph 13, i.e. other cats have fluffy tails, but cheetahs do not: ideas are connected, with the appropriate amount of text in between to maintain coherence. | p 14. Paragraph 4, sentence 4, word “cat” - author uses several words, such as it, they, cheetah and cat: students might have trouble making the connection that a cheetah can also be classified as a cat, if they are more familiar with domesticated house cats. |
| p 16. Heading: Moment of Truth - allows reader to set possible expectations about the events that will happen next: sets a purpose. | p 14. Paragraph 4, last sentence & p 16. Paragraph 2, last sentence & p 16. Paragraph 6, last sentence - phrase could be considered a colloquialism that some students (especially ELL’s) would have trouble understanding: potential to mislead students into thinking that cheetah’s can fly, and that a “flash” is an object that a cheetah can jump into. Lightning speed requires inference making skills. |
| p 16. Paragraph 4 - verbs in this paragraph are kept in the same tense: helps reader chronologically keep track of events. | p 14. Paragraph 8, sentences 3-5 - lack of connectives among ideas provides potential challenges for students: requires readers to infer, as text is less cohesive. |
| p 16. Paragraph 5, ending phrase, “. . may be hiding in the grass.” - organization of text offers a cause & effect relationship: allows readers to make connections between ideas. | p 16. Paragraph 2 - No transitions to guide readers into the next paragraph: challenging for readers who benefit from verbal reminders that give them clues that the same topic is being carried into the next paragraph or “section.” |
| p 17. Wordwise Box - typographics and graphics direct reader’s attention to key vocabulary words: words with definitions help students comprehension of the importance of adaptations and cheetah characteristics. | p 16. Paragraph 3 - “its and it’s” referent poses challenges for readers, as previous sentences make mention of both cheetahs AND gazelles. |
| p 17. Title & Descriptive, informational sentence along with graphic: Cheetahs in the Wild; A cheetah’s body is adapted to help it survive in its environment - graphic and “caption” provides visual learners a new way to look at information that has been previously introduced. | p 17. Graphic #2 - caption that describes a cheetah’s “lightweight skeleton” is new information that is never addressed in the article: introduction to new information at the close of the article allows readers few chances to make connections to ideas within the text; not cohesive. |

**Part 2: Learning Goals**

Main Idea(s):

1. Cheetahs must rely on their adaptations in order to hunt prey and to survive.
2. Cheetahs possess certain physical traits that make them awesome hunters and predators.
3. Cheetahs are not the biggest or strongest animals in their habitat, but they are one of the world’s best predators.

Big Idea(s):

1. Characteristics, or traits, are what make people, things, or groups different from others.
2. Different animal species possess different characteristics that help them to survive in their natural environment.

Learning Goals:

1. What is a characteristic? What is an adaptation? How do these two things help a cheetah to survive in the wild?
   * a characteristic is a trait that makes a person, thing, or group different from others.
   * an adaptation is a behavior or body part that helps a plant or animal survive.
   * a cheetah’s body composition allows it to run fast in order to catch its prey.
2. Which previously identified adaptations classify the cheetah as an awesome predator?
   * cheetah adaptations are specific to their species.
   * despite lacking several hunting skills/abilities, cheetahs are still one of the world’s most successful predators.

**Part 3: Planning the Launch (scripts your ideas below)**

TEACHER: Today, we’re going to talk about some physical attributes that wild animals have that make them different from one another and also help them to survive in their natural environments. Who can think of some wild animals for us?

STUDENT: Elephants!

TEACHER: Great! What is something that elephants have that some other animals might not?

STUDENT: They have trunks. Since they’re so big it’s hard for them to get on the ground if that’s where their food is. They use their trunks kind of like hands to grab food and feed themselves and to drink water too!

TEACHER: That’s right! An elephant’s trunk is a special characteristic that they have that makes them different from other animals. An elephant’s trunk is an adaptation that helps them to survive, because they use it to feed and hydrate themselves. What other animals can we come up with?

STUDENT: Giraffe; long necks.

TEACHER: Giraffe’s long necks = characteristic. Ability to reach the tops of trees for leaves when food supply is scarce, as giraffes are **herbivores**; animals that mostly eat leaves and other plants = adaptation.

\*continue with 1-2 other animal examples from students, in the same structure.

**Part 4: Planning the Exit**

How will you know if students have met the learning goals that you set?

Goal 1 Activity: “Matching Mayhem Activity”

On index cards, create a handful of “characteristic cards” that match up with corresponding “adaptation cards.” Shuffle, and randomly pass out one card to each student. Have students read their cards, and try to find their “match, or partner.” For example, one characteristic card would say:

**CHARACTERISTIC:**

thin, black markings underneath

eyes

Students would be responsible for finding their matching card; an adaptation card that would say:

**ADAPTATION:**

helps cut down glare from the sun

so the cheetah can see better.

Once students have found their match, they will orally discuss why, together, their characteristic and adaptation helps a cheetah to survive in the wild.

**EXPECTED STUDENT RESPONSE:**

These characteristics and adaptations help cheetahs to see better, which helps them when they’re hunting, so that they can catch their prey.

If students demonstrate their ability to correctly find their “match” as well as explain why/how their characteristics/adaptations help a cheetah to survive in the wild, they will have successfully met this learning goal.

Goal 2 Activity: “What Stuck With You Today?”

Create a “What Stuck With You Today” chart. The topic or subject of the chart would be: **cheetah’s hunting skills that make them awesome predators.**

Before leaving class, each student will receive a sticky note, and write what they learned or, what “stuck with them” today about the posted topic (cheetah’s hunting skills & what makes them awesome predators). This assessment will provide teachers with specific facts that students have learned, and can help determine if students have met the learning goal of identifying adaptations of cheetahs, as well as making a connection between said adaptations and what makes a cheetah an awesome predator.

**Part 5: Planning Ways to Support Student Interactions with Text Ideas**

| **Page/ending phrase** | **Question** |
| --- | --- |
| p 12/ “Its claws are dull and not made for grabbing or holding its prey.” | Q: Does anyone know what the word dull means?  A: I think it means soft, or like, not sharp.  F: Ok, and why do you think the author would want us to know that its claws are not sharp?  A: Maybe the author want us to know that the cheetahs need to sharpen their nails?  F: Ok! They COULD, or maybe the author wants us to know that maybe cheetahs need to use a different part of their body to hold their food, like their giant, sharp teeth! |
| p 12/ “. . . a cheetah is a big cat that can’t climb well or roar.” | Q: What does the author mean when they say the cheetah is a big cat?  A: My Grandma’s cat weighs 19 pounds. That’s a big cat. Does a cheetah weigh more than my Grandma’s cat?  F: Cheetahs are much bigger than your Grandma’s cat! They are in the cat FAMILY of felines, but they are a different kind of cat! |
| p 14/ “. . watches its prey.” | Q: Has anyone seen or heard this word used in a different way before?  A: Sometimes, I hear it at church with my mom! We usually always do it before bed.  F: So what do we think the author is trying to tell us about when he says that the cheetah watches its prey? Does the cheetah go to church?  A: No, no! Remember? Prey is an animal that gets eaten by other animals. The cheetah must be watching his dinner! |
| p 14/ “. . bones have adaptations to help it run fast across the grasslands.” | Q: Does anyone remember what we learned about this word, **adaptations**, earlier?  A: In the beginning! Cheetahs have them, I think.  F: Have what?  A: Adaptations! It means they’re born a certain way so they can life and survive out there. Like, its bones, they said.  F: That’s great. Why does the author want us to know about cheetah’s bones?  A: Well because their bones are special and help them run fast which helps them kill animals to eat, so they can stay and survive. Cheetah’s bones **are** adaptations. |
| p 14/ “. . can take in plenty of air.” | Q: What’s something new that we just learned about how cheetahs are able to run so fast? Is there something that the author tells us that is extra special about cheetahs?  A: Well, cheetahs breathe all that air in better than other animals.  F: Good! What makes air so important for cheetahs when they run?  A: Maybe because their lungs are bigger too, they can fit more air in there, and since they have more air to breathe because of their big lungs, maybe they can run faster! |
| p 14/ “. . these claws dig into the ground.” | Q: Does anyone notice something that the author might be comparing OR contrasting in these few sentences?  A: Well they both have claws, but cheetahs claws stay out all the time. My cat has claws at home, too, but sometimes he doesn’t, like when I’m petting him nicely.  F: How could this fact be important for us to understand the importance of cheetah’s adaptations in the wild?  A: I’m not really sure . . .  F: How might this question connect to what we were talking about earlier, about how cheetahs survive?  A: OH! Because right after it says that cheetahs claws dig into the ground, maybe so they can run faster and not fall when they’re hunting their prey. Ya know, so they can catch it and not be hungry! |
| p 16/ “. . cheetah gets closer.” | Q: Who has a prediction as to what might happen next?  A: I think the cheetah is gonna catch that gazelle.  F: Why do you think that?  A: Cheetahs are fast, and the cheetah is getting closer, they said. And then they also said that the cheetah is one of the best hunters ever! So why wouldn’t the cheetah win? F: Great prediction! I think we’ll have to read more to find out! Ready? |

**Part 6: Partner Reflection**

1. What knowledge did you **bring** to the task that helped make partner work and this learning experience about text based discussion productive?

**ERIN**:

For this task, I felt most confident in my questioning and follow-up questioning abilities. On the other hand, Hilary felt less confident in her questioning abilities. As we worked together, I was able to guide Hilary, as she practiced and perfected her technique of asking questions. Taking on the role of “teacher,” with Hilary as my “student,” I feel even MORE comfortable with generating questions and predicting student responses than when I began this task.

**HILARY**:

The knowledge I brought to this task was via my experience working closely with second graders and being able to gauge what information in the text would serve as a resource for them, and what textual context could pose a challenge for them. Also, understanding what strengths my partner had, and what strengths I had regarding the task at hand helped us determine how to divide the work. Being able to brainstorm ideas for launching our text and building off of each other’s ideas in order to come to an ultimate decision about what we thought would work best for our students, and the learning goals we were trying to accomplish was beneficial for me. Taking and giving constructive criticism about what may be a big idea versus a main idea was something I think helped us be successful at this task. Taking our ideas and role playing a real life dialogue between a student and a teacher helped is determine what questions, directions, and information could work for this text-based discussion, and what was better off being left out, or altered.

1. What knowledge did you **gain** from your partner as part of this learning experience?

**ERIN**:

As a result of this task, I feel that I gained a much deeper understanding of locating possible resources and challenges in an informational text, as this was the section of the assignment that I felt least comfortable/confident about. Hilary and I’s partnership was perfect; my strengths complimented her weaknesses, and my weaknesses complimented her strengths! As we worked together, I would often stop, and turn to Hilary to ask her opinion on a certain element of the text that I had selected as either a challenge or a resource. This think-out-loud strategy was helpful for me, as it allowed me the opportunity to correct or re-think my selections, as well as take note of any particular patterns I found myself following, i.e. focusing too much on specific referential relations.

**HILARY**:

I gained a lot of knowledge from my partner, Erin. Erin was extremely knowledgable regarding the vocabulary we use in our EDC 423 class when pulling apart a text, such as colloquialism, referential relations, and connectives. Erin using these words while we discussed our plan reiterated the meanings for me, and I was able to see how the words could be used in a real life lesson planning setting. During our planning, we were discussing different adaptations, and Erin, being the Dachshund aficionado that she is, was able to inform me as to why Dachshunds have such short legs, and how vicious they can be. They were actually bred to storm into badger holes. What! I tend to be a professional procrastinator, and having Erin as a partner helped me stay on task, and she really took the reigns on pulling everything together that we had collected, organizing it, and printing the final copy.